

**Minutes of the
Upper Mississippi River System
Environmental Management Program
Coordinating Committee**

**May 22, 2008
Quarterly Meeting**

**Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel
St. Paul, Minnesota**

Charlie Wooley of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. on May 22, 2008. Other EMP-CC representatives present were Terry Smith (USACE), Mike Jawson (USGS/ UMESC), Rick Mollahan (IL DNR), Martin Konrad (IA DNR), Tim Schlagenhaft (MN DNR), Janet Sternburg (MO DoC), and Gretchen Benjamin (WI DNR). A list of attendees follows these minutes.

Minutes from the February 21, 2008 Meeting

Gretchen Benjamin moved and Martin Konrad seconded a motion to approve the draft minutes of the February 21, 2008 meeting as written. The motion was approved unanimously.

Program Management

FY 08 Fiscal Update

Marv Hubbell summarized the FY 08 EMP budget as of the 2nd quarter. Spreadsheets detailing the expenditures and allocations are included in the packet materials. Hubbell said the requirement to fully fund contracts upon award tends to increase carry-over from one year to the next because the full amount of the contract is often not obligated and expended in the year of the award. Through March 31, 2008, the EMP has obligated approximately 60 percent of its FY 08 allocation. HREP and LTRMP obligation rates are at about 55 and 80 percent of their allocated funds, respectively.

FY 09 Update

Hubbell reported the EMP is included at \$20 million in the President's FY 09 budget request. This is down from last year's request and continues a downward trend for EMP funding in the President's budgets over the last few years. However, the EMP remains a top ecosystem restoration priority for the Administration, and is identified as one of three national priorities for FY 09. The Corps is working on its FY 10 budget and expects to submit its request to the Office of Management and Budget within the next couple of weeks.

Holly Stoerker described recent congressional visits concerning EMP and NESP funding. In March, a group of NGO and UMRBA representatives met with energy and water appropriations staff on both the House and Senate sides. Stoerker recognized The Nature Conservancy's efforts in arranging the visits with appropriations staff. The staff indicated that the appropriations committees might be open to funding the EMP at about \$20 million in FY 09. But, as anticipated, they want to see a plan for phasing out the EMP before they will contemplate substantial funding for NESP. In response to those meetings,

UMRBA staff worked with Corps personnel to refine the projects list contained in the Association's November 2007 vision statement concerning NESP-EMP integration.

Gretchen Benjamin asked Mike Jawson for his reaction to the proposed phase out plan for LTRMP. Jawson said that, although the LTRMP could maintain integrity of the base program under this funding scenario, it would not be able to move forward with additional items — e.g. LiDAR and bathymetry.

Hubbell explained that the refined phase out plan calls for \$20 million annually for the EMP over the next three to four years. It identifies specific HREPs that would be completed under the EMP, as well as funding for the LTRMP at \$6.1 million annually.

Stoerker added that the primary message to appropriations staff in response to their questions about the exit strategy was that EMP cannot stop immediately, and that there is a period of time during which projects should be completed under EMP and an orderly transition effectuated. Don Powell asked if there were any hints from the staff regarding NESP appropriations, and Stoerker said that they indicated new construction starts were unlikely in FY 09. She observed that transitioning NESP from General Investigations to the Construction account will probably be a bigger hurdle than increasing its appropriations amount.

Gabe Horner acknowledged Stoerker's efforts in creating a strong partnership for EMP and emphasized that the path to success on appropriations is a member's request. She said that TNC is on the Hill throughout the process educating and advocating for EMP and NESP. TNC is also working with its NGO partners to get members of Congress on the UMR to educate them about river resources and issues.

Tim Schlagenhaft stressed the importance of thinking carefully about the LTRMP's transition from EMP to NESP, with particular attention to maintaining program continuity. He suggested identifying a floor level of funding as part of the transition. Janet Sternburg agreed that will be an important issue to discuss. Hubbell said he has begun having some of these discussions with Chuck Spitzack and Ken Barr. According to Spitzack, they envision addressing this topic as part of the June 2009 Implementation Report and the supplemental report that will follow.

Ken Barr presented several budget scenarios for the LTRMP, to illustrate the likely funding challenges that lie ahead. If the LTRMP is funded exclusively through NESP, that NESP funding would have to be substantial in order for the LTRMP to receive sufficient funding, assuming the total NESP appropriation is allocated proportionately among the various program elements. For example, if allocations are proportionate to total authorization, then a total NESP appropriation of \$115 million would yield about \$5 million to the LTRMP. Similarly, a total NESP appropriation of \$230 million would yield about \$10 million to the LTRMP.

Tim Schlagenhaft emphasized that Barr's scenarios underscore the urgency of addressing the LTRMP's future as it transitions to NESP. He suggested establishing a small group to address these issues. Hubbell said he views the FY 10-14 LTRMP strategic planning process as the most appropriate place for such discussions. Specifically, he stressed the need to include NESP staff in the next phase of this process, where an Operational Plan will be developed to bridge the Strategic Plan and the annual work plans. Mike Jawson concurred, stressing his concern that falling below a critical funding threshold would quickly result in the loss of significant personnel and corporate memory for the LTRMP that would take many years to replace.

Charlie Wooley asked if this was an acceptable proposal for further discussion. Martin Konrad responded that this is a good discussion topic. He observed that the River Advisory Panel (RAP) would presumably also need to be engaged in these discussions, assuming it is established as proposed. Hubbell agreed with Konrad and stressed that both programs and the whole partnership will be needed

to have an effective discussion. He also reminded EMP-CC members that shifting money from habitat projects to support the LTRMP would threaten the HREP program with the same kinds of staff loss and loss of institutional memory as Jawson indicated the LTRMP would experience.

Marv Hubbell recapped the possible next steps:

- Review and completion of the FY 10-14 LTRMP Strategic Plan, including the solicitation of input from NESP staff (Aug. 08)
- Preparation of an Operational Plan that will bridge the Strategic Plan and the annual work plans (March 09)
- Preparation of the NESP Report to Congress in June 09 and the supplemental report that will follow that document.

Benjamin asked if the timeline presented is fast enough. Hubbell said he thinks it should be okay, but said the Corps would be open to accelerating the discussion about LTRMP transition if needed. Jawson said it would be best to identify a floor for LTRMP funding by May. Barr agreed with the need to move forward with coordination regarding transition issues, but noted that NESP cannot define a floor for the LTRMP until NESP's overall funding future is clarified.

Public Involvement and Outreach

Marv Hubbell reported that the Corps is currently briefing BG Walsh, the new MVD commander, on UMR issues. MVR also continues to work with the Dubuque museum on the traveling display, which should be done shortly. He also noted that, at the Mississippi River Research Consortium meeting in April 2008, at least 50 percent of the poster and platform presentations were about APE projects or other LTRMP work, with many highlighting the effectiveness of HREPs. Martin Konrad mentioned that there may be a possibility for EMP to take part in the Mississippi River Stakeholders Conference in the Quad Cities on August 21-23, 2008, and Hubbell said he will explore the opportunity.

Janet Sternburg said she has been asked to give a presentation on the Middle Mississippi River Partnership to a foundation-sponsored effort to link river communities from Minnesota to Louisiana, in June 2008.

Mike Jawson said that next year will be UMESC's 50th anniversary and there certainly be a possibility to design an activity that highlights LTRMP.

Gretchen Benjamin and Don Powell highlighted the recent Spring Lake HREP tree planting event as an excellent opportunity for media coverage and volunteer involvement. Benjamin suggested the upcoming retirement of the Dredge Thompson and the MV Mississippi's low water inspection trip as opportunities to make good use of the traveling display that Corps is completing with the Dubuque Museum. Powell reported that there was excellent turnout at a recent public meeting to discuss upcoming work on the Pool 8 Islands project. Approximately 30 local citizens attended.

Charlie Wooley said that the FWS Directorate meeting will be held in La Crosse during the first week in August. He said it will be an important opportunity to get the FWS Director and other senior leaders out on the UMR, including visits to HREPs.

Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects

FY 08 Work Plan Update

Marv Hubbell reported on the status of the Lake Odessa project, MVR's top construction priority for FY 08. During this spring's high water, the spillway, designed to minimize damage from high water, functioned as designed. However, the perimeter levee, which had not yet been improved, was breached in four areas. The damage will be assessed soon, and there will definitely be budget impacts from needed repairs. Further details will be presented at the EMP-CC's August meeting, which will include a project showcase featuring Lake Odessa.

Brian Markert explained that MVS had based its FY 08 HREP work plan on an anticipated \$4 million allocation. With actual allocation of \$3.34 million, funds are very tight for MVS, and the district is curtailing various HREP activities where possible and taking back task orders. However, this year's increment on the Batchtown project cannot be broken down further, and MVS may require fund transfers from the other two districts.

Don Powell said that Pool 8 Phase III, Stages 2A and 2B are the MVP's FY 08 construction priorities. Work is being finished on Stage 2A, and the contractor is preparing for the hydraulic dredging to construct islands as part of Stage 2B. MVP hopes to award another option on Stage 2B, if funding is available. Plans and specs for Pool 8 Phase III Stage 3 are being developed, with construction likely next year. Clear Lake will also be a potential FY 09 construction project. DPRs are under development for Capoli and Harpers Sloughs.

HREP Showcase – Pool 8 Islands Phase III Stage 1

Powell showcased the Pool 8 Islands Phase III Stage 1 HREP, which involved the construction of three breakwaters to protect the Coon Creek Delta from wave damage. Since Phase III was much larger than Phases I and II, it was divided into three stages to accommodate limited annual budgets and the need to fully fund contracts upon award. Stage 1 was completed in September 2006 and has been largely successful in achieving its objectives, including sediment retention within the delta. In total, Phase III will create 17 islands totaling 123 acres and will cost \$15 million. An estimated 3,000 acres of habitat will be benefited.

The project is also being used to study fish habitat requirements and to assess which materials are more effective to use for island construction. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is monitoring Island E-1 to determine whether the cobble or coarse gravel used for island formation is more conducive for fish spawning and waterfowl habitat. Island E-2 tested the effectiveness of using black locust timber held by geotextile fabric and rock. The technique was successful, with the timber proving less expensive than using all rock. It is holding up well a year later. Island E-3 was constructed by moving dredged material from the front to the back of the breakwater. Willow and dogwood trees were planted with the help of volunteers. The vegetation response will be monitored, and although some mortality is expected, the Corps anticipates good long term results.

Mike Jawson asked if the timbers are expected to rot and what the implications would be for the project success. Powell said they do not expect the timbers to decompose because black locust is very dense and will be completely submerged under water and not exposed to air. Karen Hagerty asked why the Corps used three different island designs. Powell responded that the site conditions varied — e.g., areas with higher energy needed more rock. In addition, MVP was trying various approaches to contain costs and gain insight regarding different techniques. Also, aesthetics weighed more heavily for the island visible from Highway 35.

Martin Konrad asked what partner monitoring will be done on the project. Powell explained that Pool 8 is a key LTRMP trend pool. In addition, MVP will conduct its customary physical and chemical monitoring. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will monitor fish populations, and the states and U.S. FWS will do other routine monitoring. Janet Sternburg asked if any techniques used have since been determined to be unsuccessful. Powell said all of the approaches have been fundamentally successful, but that the Corps and its partners have learned from each phase, allowing them to improve techniques for subsequent phases. For example, the designs are more cost-effective, erosion rates associated with island overtopping have been reduced, and more mudflats are incorporated into the island design. He added that the success of the seed islands is still being monitored. In response to a question from Tim Schlagenhaft, Powell said the mudflats are remaining unvegetated and functioning as designed.

Barry Johnson asked how many phases there will be in the Pool 8 Islands project. Powell responded that there will be five phases in total, contingent upon EMP continuing, but said several other HREPs are ranked ahead for Pool 8 Phases IV and V in terms of priority. Johnson emphasized the importance of having a clear design endpoint and indicators for measuring project success. He observed that, if this cannot be done in Pool 8, with its wealth of data, it will likely not be possible elsewhere on the river. Schlagenhaft observed that Pool 8 Island was designed in the absence of clearly articulated system and reach goals and objectives. As such, the design has focused on recovering from a known loss of physical structure, with the goal of achieving beneficial biological response. Powell and Benjamin observed that the fisheries and waterfowl response has been strong.

Long Term Resource Monitoring Program

APE Project Showcase

Pat Heglund showcased an APE project that identified neotropical migratory bird patterns along the Mississippi River corridor, analyzed the importance of floodplain forests and bluffland habitat, and discovered “hotspots” along the river. Heglund observed that the results of this work could be used to inform the selection of priority locations for restoration projects. The work has been done in collaboration with several organizations, with funding from a variety of sources, including the LTRMP and the base USGS budget. However, APE funding was not provided in FY 08 to support the continuation of this research.

Transect surveys, mist netting, NEXRAD and plasma sampling were all employed to compare the abundance, diversity, condition, and temporal and spatial patterns of birds in floodplain and bluffland habitats. Transects were placed in floodplains and uplands within ten miles from the river along Pools 6-8 and 16-18.

Results have shown that migratory birds depend on floodplains more than bluffs, but non-migratory birds use the two habitats more equally; migratory populations increased from 2005 to 2007, most likely due to hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico; and birds in the floodplains are somewhat healthier than in the bluffs. Possible next steps for research include putting transmitters on birds to determine stopover points and other behaviors more accurately.

Hubbell asked what part of the floodplain is important to migratory birds and what features are important to preserve or restore. Heglund said the upper pool areas and vegetated islands are important for their trees, but added that key characteristics and structural components are not fully known. She said these are important questions for future research. Charlie Woolly asked what the primary food source is for migratory birds, and Heglund replied that it is mostly invertebrate species.

In response to questions from Janet Sternburg, Heglund said NEXRAD data extends twelve years and can be used to determine fall migration patterns, which is another potential research topic. Konrad asked if it is possible to track migration into Mississippi tributaries. Heglund said this is a goal, but that there are limited researchers and resources to do it. Gretchen Benjamin asked whether birds, bats, and bugs could be separated using NEXRAD and Heglund said analysts infer such distinctions based on time of year or behavioral patterns. In response to Gabe Horner, Heglund said the data are not available to assess how migratory birds' relative dependence on the UMR floodplain may have changed over time as suitable off-river habitats have been lost.

FY 08 Update – Key findings and products from 2nd Quarter

Mike Jawson noted that Heidi Langrehr, on the staff of Wisconsin's LTRMP field station, recently received Wisconsin DNR's Pride Award in the category of partnership spirit.

Jawson reported on key LTRMP findings and products for the 2nd quarter of FY 08. USGS completed inter-laboratory comparison testing this spring that assessed over 100 of its labs. Results for the LTRMP water quality lab were excellent.

Recent program highlights include:

- Over 10 excellent platform and poster presentations from the LTRMP at Mississippi River Research Consortium
- A forthcoming manuscript that explores 200 years of change on the Mississippi System through various new databases (will explore further at a future meeting)
- An LTRMP report on evaluating the fisheries impacts of an HREP (will attempt to provide a more thorough briefing on this report at a future EMP-CC meeting)
- Three APE completion reports on the following topics: 1) a floodplain forest restoration database, 2) an integrated waterbird database for monitoring status and trends, and 3) the importance of the UMR forest corridor to neotropical migratory birds.

Jawson gave an overview of the APE FY 09 timeline and focus areas. The call for letters of intent will be distributed on May 23, 2008, with a mid-July deadline for submission. USGS, USACE, and the A-Team will issue invitations to develop full proposals in late August, and full proposals will be due in October. The focus areas remain unchanged from FY 08—i.e., connectivity, landscape/habitat patterns, aquatic vegetation, baseline goals for major resources monitored, and native mussels.

Barb Naramore asked if there will still be a letter of interest step in the APE process, similar to last year. Jennie Sauer and Jawson said that the letter of interest step will not be employed this year, though collaboration among investigators will still be strongly encouraged.

LTRMP Information Delivery

Jawson reviewed the current LTRMP product types, including presentations, completion reports, web updates, USGS fact sheets, USGS open-file reports, LTRMP reports, and manuscripts. These are listed in order of increasing time required to complete. Acknowledging concerns related to timely access to LTRMP information and findings, Jawson said ways to enhance access include distributing completion reports more widely and developing an interim paper along the lines of an expanded abstract for research awaiting journal publication. Jawson explained that most documents are searchable on UMESC's web by title, text, abstract, and keywords. There are over 300 LTRMP reports available online from 1995 to present, 50 project status reports, four fact sheets/open-file reports, and numerous annual component updates and reports.

According to Jawson, problems to the current system include 1) completion reports are not citable and not available on-line and 2) LTRMP reports published prior to 1995 and all of the reprinted reports are not available on-line and/or are not in PDF format. The LTRMP reports could be made searchable by converting them into PDF format, but the process is time consuming and costly, due in part to current accessibility standards. Conversion would require significant additional resources. Completion reports could also be made more accessible by making them searchable by title, intro/abstract, and keywords and providing contact information to receive a hardcopy. Jawson said the question is how much effort and funding is justified to make completion and historical reports web-available.

Gretchen Benjamin asked if the Corps has all of the pre-2006 completion/contract reports. Marv Hubbell and Karen Hagerty said that they are all stored at Rock Island and that Hagerty is compiling a list of the reports. Hagerty suggested comparing this list to the list of published manuscripts and not converting completion/contract reports to PDF in instances where that project resulted in a manuscript.

Charlie Wooley suggested that having the information of what is available would help in making decisions on how best to go forward. Janet Sternburg asked if the older reports are searchable by title only and Sauer said all reports published after 1987 are also searchable by abstract and keyword. Jawson recommended providing hardcopies of the reports upon request rather than creating PDFs for each report, due to cost considerations. He suggested that future completion reports include an indication as to whether there will ultimately be a manuscript or LTRMP report published for the work. Linda Leake recalled that, in the earliest days of the LTRMP, there were no completion/contract reports. Instead, there was an administrative letter of project status report (PSR) produced summarizing the work.

Benjamin suggested that a metadata record of questions examined and the level of analysis done on these questions would be more valuable than converting all old reports into PDF format. She added that there could be various ways to identify questions asked, answered, and left unanswered due to lack of resources, etc. Benjamin said that information should be summarized and condensed into an inventory, so we are not continuously regenerating the same list. Hubbell and Jawson expressed concern that such an inventory could be quite time consuming. Benjamin emphasized that she is not suggesting an effort to review all old meeting minutes, etc. in search of questions someone may have raised. Instead, she noted that there has been a handful of instances in which the partners have formally sought to identify key questions. It is these efforts Benjamin is suggesting be inventoried in a centralized manner.

Hubbell summarized the discussion, identifying three main issues to be addressed:

- 1) how best to provide access (including at least title and keyword searchability) to historical documents that are not currently available online,
- 2) the system for providing timely access to project completion reports moving forward, and
- 3) options for inventorying the key questions and research foci that have been formally identified at various points in the LTRMP's history.

USGS and USACE will staff will evaluate these issues and then report back to the full partnership at the August meeting.

Naramore asked if the accessibility requirements for the visually impaired will place an extra burden on posting new documents on the web and, if so, whether this will affect the LTRMP Strategic Plan's recommendations regarding information accessibility. Leake and Jawson said there is a new software tool that helps to meet these requirements by identifying areas that need manual intervention or added description — e.g. charts, maps, and other visual items. They said compliance is much less burdensome with new documents than with historical publications.

Status and Trends Report

Barry Johnson reported that the Status and Trends Report is nearing completion, with some final editorial work and responses to comments remaining. The published report should be available before the August quarterly meeting. Hubbell explained that USACE and USGS plan to reflect this summer about what has been learned during the course of developing this Status and Trends Report. He noted that, in contrast to the previous Status and Trends Report, the current report is limited to what we know about status and trends using LTRMP data. Partner input on the after action report is welcome. Hubbell said USACE and USGS will report back, at either the August or November EMP-CC meeting, on lessons learned and how these might inform development of the next Status and Trends Report.

Rick Mollahan asked if the accessibility requirements will slow down the publication processes for the Status and Trends Report. Leake explained that the USGS publication network should produce a compliant PDF.

A-Team Report

Janet Sternburg gave a brief overview of the A-Team's meeting in April 2008 and distributed a written report describing the team's discussions. She thanked Johnson and others for their excellent presentations at the meeting, and conveyed the A-Team's appreciation for the retiring Tom Kelly's long service to the LTRMP. Sternburg said she will encourage the A-Team to consider its future role as EMP transitions to NESP. Jennie Sauer noted that field station and UMESC staff will hold a joint meeting in Muscatine in June. Benjamin asked why the field sampling has been dropped from the meeting agenda, expressing her sense that the sampling effort was good for camaraderie and had the potential to yield useful information about the area sampled. Sauer explained that quality checks that were the primary purpose for this group sampling effort are being handled other ways and participants concluded that it was inefficient to move the equipment for one day of sampling. Johnson added that the decision was also based on input from field stations and UMESC staff.

LiDAR and Bathymetry

Karen Hagerty gave an update on the status of LiDAR and bathymetric data collection. Iowa DNR staff is currently processing the LiDAR coverage for Pools 8-14 and 20-24. Pools 15-19 could not be flown before spring leaf out due to high water levels. The contractor will fly these pools this fall at no extra cost. Iowa DNR agreed to process the systemic data in exchange for data access. UMESC is currently working with USACE to examine options for serving the data. Cost estimates for obtaining LiDAR for Pools 1-7 and Pool 25 to the Open River are \$175,000 and \$300,000, respectively. Hagerty noted that there may be additional money available to fly some of these remaining areas this year.

In response to a question from Martin Konrad, Hagerty said UMESC has expressed interest in housing and serving the LiDAR data. Sauer added that serving the data is not in UMESC's FY 08 work plan. Instead, UMESC is currently reviewing data quality and determining the best options for serving the data. Sternburg asked if there is a prioritization scheme that will be used to determine priorities for additional data collection — e.g., are there reaches or pools where LiDAR could best be used to inform HREPs. Hubbell responded that the data collection needs to be done for large areas in order to be cost efficient. The Corps plans to collect the data for Pools 1-7 next, and then do the remaining areas in large sections — i.e., the remaining UMR pools and the Illinois River.

Hagerty reported that USACE is currently inventorying existing bathymetric coverages, identifying gaps, and determining how best to complete the project under different funding scenarios. In 2001, it was estimated that \$2 million would be required to complete a systemic coverage, but that figure needs

to be updated to reflect inflation and changes in the existing coverage. Hubbell said that USACE has deferred any further spending under the LTRMP on the systemic bathymetric coverage until the evaluation is completed and a plan developed.

Schlagenhaft acknowledged the value of bathymetric data, but observed that conditions on the river can change rapidly. As a result, the bathymetric data is often updated for project-specific purposes. He suggested establishing transects as a way of estimating changes over time and then focusing bathymetric resources on specific project areas. Jon Hendrickson observed that large scale bathymetry is irreplaceable for modeling purposes, though transects such as those previously done under the LTRMP do offer more accurate data. Benjamin pointed out that systemic bathymetry could be very useful in informing mussel data collection efforts. Without bathymetric data, mussel data is collected using a randomized grid, which could easily leave key areas unexamined. Sternburg agreed that systemic bathymetry is not necessarily helpful for project planning in areas with high levels of change, but said she can appreciate the utility of systemic coverage for modeling and other purposes. Hagerty added that USACE knows where the most dynamic areas are located. In response to a question from Schlagenhaft, Hendrickson said he needs systemic coverage for modeling about every 10 years in most areas, but requires more frequent data in dynamic areas.

LTRMP Strategic Plan

Marv Hubbell reported that the FY 10-14 Strategic Plan is out for review. The draft reflects a simultaneous effort to be forward-looking and to build off of what has been learned in the program's first 22 years. It envisions a program funded at roughly the authorized level of \$10.42 million, with questions of relative priorities among the plan's components deferred to a follow-on Operational Plan. Hubbell gave a brief overview of the Strategic Plan's outcomes, outputs, and the strategies for management of LTRMP organizational resources.

In response to a question from Doug Blodgett, Hubbell said that while the potential additional monitoring areas are listed in terms of priority, the order in which they are done depends on funding, logical sequencing, and other considerations that will be dealt with more in the Operational Plan. Charlie Wooley asked if the Corps will be approving the plan. Hubbell said the Corps will evaluate the draft plan, as will other partners. He expressed his hope that all of the partners would then endorse a revised version of that plan thru the EMP-CC. He indicated that the Corps will then have the responsibility as the implementing agency to allocate the resources and oversee the plan's execution.

Wooly asked if climate change has been incorporated into the plan. Hubbell said climate change considerations are embedded throughout the Strategic Plan, including ways in which LTRMP data may be helpful and linkages to possible collaborative opportunities.

Hubbell and Jawson requested that partners and stakeholders review the draft strategic plan and submit their comments to the appropriate point of contact by June 16, 2008. The LTRMP Strategic Planning Team will hold its final meeting on July 14-16, with the goal of submitting a revised plan for the EMP-CC's consideration and possible action in August.

LTRMP Operational Plan

Jawson explained that, upon completion of the FY 10-14 Strategic Plan, an Operational Plan will be created to bridge the gap between the Strategic Plan and LTRMP's annual work plans. The Operational Plan will sequence and prioritize the outputs, including consideration of cost estimates and scalability. Potential changes to current nomenclature (e.g., MSP) and processes (e.g., the annual APE selection process) will be evaluated as well. USGS and USACE staff will discuss their thoughts regarding the Operational Plan process in more detail with the LTRMP Strategic Planning Team at its July 2008

meeting. Jawson and Hubbell said their working assumption is that the same agencies, and in many instances, the same individuals will participate in the operation planning process. Jawson said he envisions the operational planning effort will require approximately four meetings, with the goal of completing the plan by this time next year. He stressed the importance of retaining some flexible funds each year to respond to emerging needs and opportunities.

Hubbell and Jawson offered to hold individual meetings with staff from each LTRMP partner state and federal agency. Jawson explained that a state meeting would presumably include field station staff, the state's A-Team and EMP-CC members, as well as other interested staff from that state. In response to a question from Martin Konrad, Jawson said the purpose of these meetings would be to discuss the Strategic Plan, with particular attention to understanding the state's/ federal agency's priorities and data use. He added that insight regarding priorities will be particularly important before the operational planning process gets underway. Hubbell observed that the strategic planning effort has enhanced communications and mutual understanding among the partnership tremendously, and said he hoped that the individual meetings would build on this progress. Jawson said that the meetings will also provide an opportunity to understand how data is used by the field stations and to evaluate the options for optimally using field station resources. Konrad, Sternburg, and Benjamin indicated their states' interest in participating in such meetings. USACE and USGS will contact the states and federal agency partners regarding scheduling of these meetings, with the objective of holding meetings with all interested partners by the end of summer, if possible.

Other Business

Barb Naramore announced that the upcoming quarterly meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **August 2008 – La Crosse**
 - UMRBA – August 5
 - **EMP-CC – August 6**
 - **Joint EMP-CC and NECC/ECC – afternoon of August 6**
 - NECC/ECC – August 7

- **November 2008 Quad Cities**
 - UMRBA – November 18
 - NECC/ECC – November 19
 - **Joint EMP-CC and NECC/ECC – afternoon of November 19** (if needed)
 - **EMP-CC – November 20**

- **February 2009**
 - UMRBA – February 17
 - **EMP-CC – February 18**
 - **Joint EMP-CC and RAP – afternoon of August 6** (if needed)
 - RAP – February 19

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

**EMP-CC Attendance List
May 22, 2008**

EMP-CC Members

Terry Smith	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVD
Charlie Wooley	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3
Mike Jawson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Rick Mollahan	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Martin Konrad	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Tim Schlagenhaft	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Janet Sternburg	Missouri Department of Conservation
Gretchen Benjamin	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Others in Attendance

Don Powell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Jeff DeZellar	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Jon Hendrickson	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVP
Chuck Spitzack	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Marvin Hubbell	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Ken Barr	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Karen Hagerty	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVR
Brian Markert	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Bruce Munholand	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MVS
Pat Heglund	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3
Jon Duyvejonck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, RIFO
Sharonne Baylor	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMR Refuge
Scott Yess	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UMRCC
Linda Leake	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Jennie Sauer	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Barry Johnson	U.S. Geological Survey, UMESC
Dru Buntin	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Gabrielle Horner	The Nature Conservancy
Doug Blodgett	The Nature Conservancy
Holly Stoerker	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Barb Naramore	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Dave Hokanson	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
Kirsten Mickelsen	Upper Mississippi River Basin Association